STIMULUS WATCH: WEEK 51

Does Money Grow on Trees? $490,000 Spent on Planting Trees and Tree Care Training Classes

➢ The U.S. Forest Service is providing $490,000 in stimulus funds to the Nevada Division of Forestry's "Nursery Greening Project." Specifically, the stimulus project will provide 2,500 trees at no cost to nonprofits and government entities for planting on public lands throughout Clark County in southern Nevada. In addition, the funding will cover the cost of tree care training classes for Spanish-speaking "green-industry" workers.

➢ Oddly, now does not seem to be a good time to plant trees in southern Nevada. According to Rep. Dean Heller (R-NV), "Funding tree planting during record drought conditions in Nevada not only is poor use of federal dollars, but makes very little sense."

➢ The Nevada State Forest Service says the project will create or retain "several" jobs. Unfortunately, as Pete Sepp of the National Taxpayers Union points out, the free tree project will only create temporary employment, "at best." And jobs don't even seem to be a priority of the project. Rather, the stated intent is to "increase public awareness of tree benefits, provide tree-care education, involve citizen volunteers in urban forestry programs and increase tree planting."

➢ Meanwhile, Nevada has the highest unemployment rate in the nation at 14%.

➢ Under the House Republican Stimulus Alternative, $490,000 would not be spent for a tree planting initiative, especially during a record drought. Instead, Republicans would have created twice as many jobs at half the cost. To learn how visit: http://republicanwhip.house.gov/Jobs/

➢ **Source:** http://www.nevadanewsbureau.com/2010/07/09/490-million-in-federal-stimulus-to-be-spent-on-nevada-tree-planting-tree-care-classes/

The Washington Watch Report is available on the House Republican Whip's website:
http://republicanwhip.house.gov/blog/wwindex.html

It is updated weekly with new items of wasteful stimulus spending, a look at jobs created by the stimulus.